

Frequently Asked Questions about Complaints and Investigations

Q. If I file a complaint, can I get my money back from the veterinarian? Or can I file a complaint because I think my veterinarian charges too much or keeps billing me for fees I owe?

A. The Veterinary Board does not have jurisdiction over fees or fee disputes. The Board does not award monetary damages, nor does it compel veterinarians to refund any monies.

Q. Can I file a complaint if my veterinarian will not treat my pet until I pay him? I had a disagreement with my veterinarian and now he/she will not see my pets. Is this ethical?

A. According to the Veterinary Practice Act, A.A.C. R3-11-501 (7), a veterinarian is free to choose whom he will serve. The Board has no jurisdiction over business practices.

Q. Is my complaint valid?

A. Board staff cannot offer advice, legal or otherwise. Any person may file a complaint if they believe there have been issues regarding medical care, ethics or professional conduct of licensees.

Q. If I file a complaint is anything done about it?

A. Every complaint goes through the same process. The process is outlined in "What to Expect After a Complaint is Filed." If violations of the Veterinary Practice Act are found, sanctions may be taken against the licensee.

Q. How do I know the Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board is not just protecting the veterinarians?

A. The mission of the Veterinary Board is to protect the interest of the general public and the welfare of their pets. Every complaint is investigated as outlined in "What to Expect After a Complaint is Filed."

Q. I want to file a complaint but I want to remain anonymous. How is that handled?

A. Although anonymous complaints can be accepted we cannot guarantee anonymity. It is also important to realize that the case may be dismissed due to insufficient evidence. Adequate documentation and substantiation of allegations is essential in order to ensure a thorough investigation of the case.

Q. Can you tell me if a veterinarian or premise has had any complaints in the past?

A. Yes, you may visit our website, go to the directory and type in the veterinarians name to see if they have had any disciplinary action against their license or you may contact the Board office and a staff member can give you that information over the phone.

Q. My pet requires a specialist. Can you refer me to one?

A. No. The Board office cannot provide referrals. You may consult the Yellow Pages, or contact the Arizona Veterinary Medical Association (602-242-7936), who may have a list of their members and their specialties. Be aware that this may not be a complete listing, as membership in the Arizona Veterinary Medical Association is voluntary.

Q. I need clarification on a Statute or Rule; can you help me? Where can I get a copy of the Statutes and Rules?

A. Staff cannot interpret the Statutes or Rules for you. You will need to consult with an attorney. A printer friendly version of the Arizona Statutes and Administrative Rules are located on our HOME page of our website or you may send a written request with \$5.00 to the AzVMEB, 1400 W. Washington, Rm. 240, Phoenix, Arizona 85007.